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(71) Applicant (*for all designated States except US*): OTAWA HEALTH RESEARCH INSTITUTE [CA/CA];
725 Parkdale Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 4E9 (CA).

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(72) Inventor; and

(75) Inventor/Applicant (*for US only*): MEGENEY, Lynn
[CA/CA]; 2065 Woodcrest Road, Ottawa, Ontario K1H
6H9 (CA).



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(54) Title: MODULATION OF STEM CELL DIFFERENTIATION BY MODULATION OF CASPASE-3 ACTIVITY

(57) Abstract: Methods of directing stem cell fate for therapeutic purposes through the deliberate manipulation of caspase-3 activity are provided. The use of modulators of caspase-3 activity to modulate stem cell differentiation is described including activators and/or effectors of caspase-3, which can be used to induce stem cell differentiation, and inhibitors of caspase-3, which can be used to inhibit differentiation and thereby promote or maintain proliferation of stem cells. Methods of screening for modulators of caspase-3 and the use of such compounds to modulate stem cell differentiation *in vitro* or *in vivo* are also provided as are therapeutic applications of the compounds.